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10/044,051	01/10/2002	Ian G. Telford	62116	7974

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THE DOW CHEMICAL COMPANY  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY SECTION  
P. O. BOX 1967  
MIDLAND, MI 48641-1967

EXAMINER

FISCHER, ANDREW J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3627

DATE MAILED: 03/04/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No. 10/044,051	Applicant(s) TELFORD ET AL.	
	Examiner Andrew J. Fischer	Art Unit 3627	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 18-21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/29/02; 11/19/02</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Acknowledgements***

1. All references in this Office Action to the capitalized versions of "Applicant" refers specifically the Applicant of record. References to lower case versions of "applicant" or "applicants" refers to any or all patent "applicants." Unless expressly noted otherwise, references to "Examiner" in this Office Action refers to the Examiner of record while reference to or use of the lower case version of "examiner" refers to examiner(s) generally.
2. This application in an image file wrapper ("IFW") application. Applicants' response is therefore separated before being placed into the IFW system (*i.e.* claims, remarks, drawings, etc. are separated and independently scanned). To ensure proper handling by he Examiner, the Examiner highly recommends Applicants place the application serial no (*e.g.* 06/123,456) in a header or footer (or other appropriate area) of *each* page submitted. At the very least, the Examiner highly recommends this practice for all pages listing the claims.
3. This Office Action is written in OACS. Because of this, the Examiner is unable to control formatting, paragraph numbering, font, spelling, line spacing, and/or other word processing issues. The Examiner sincerely apologies for these errors.

### ***Restrictions***

4. Restriction to one of the following inventions is usually required under 35 U.S.C. §121:
  - I. Claims 1 and 3-17, drawn to a method of buying and selling, classified in class 705, subclass 21.
  - II. Claim 2, drawn to a web-based sales system, classified in class 705, subclass 26.

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III. Claims 18-21, drawn to a method of selling, classified in class 705, subclass 27.

5. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

6. Inventions I and II are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case, Invention I is not patentably distinct from Invention II and conversely, Invention II is not patentably distinct from Invention I. Therefore a restriction is improper at this time. If Applicants disagree with the Examiner (*i.e.* Applicants believe Inventions I and II *are* patentably distinct), Applicants are reminded to properly traverse the Examiner's finding in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b) in their next response and provide appropriate arguments in support thereof. Applicants are also reminded that should Applicants amend any claim within inventions I or II such that the claims drawn to Inventions I and II *become* patentably distinct, Invention II will be restricted out at that time.

7. Inventions I and III are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention I has separate utility such as being used to buy products using FTP. See MPEP §806.05(d).

8. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group I is not required for Group III, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

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9. A telephone call was made to Joe R. Prieto on or about January 30, 2005. In that call or in response to that call, a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1 and 3-17. Affirmation of this election must be made by Applicants in replying to this Office Action. The Examiner notes that because Invention II is not patentably distinct from Invention I, Invention II will be examined even though it is not part of the elected invention.

10. Claims 18-21 are withdrawn from further consideration by the Examiner, 37 C.F.R. §1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

11. Applicants are reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 C.F.R. §1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 C.F.R. §1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 C.F.R. §1.17(i).

### *Specification*

12. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it exceeds the maximum length and is simply a recitation of a claim. Correction is required. See MPEP §608.01(b).

13. The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 C.F.R. §1.75(d)(1), MPEP §608.01(o), and MPEP §2181.

Correction of the following is required:

- i. The “means for transacting” as recited in claim 2.
- ii. The “means for completing the transaction” as recited in claim 2.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC §112 2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph***

14. The following is a quotation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

15. Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claims are replete with errors. Some examples follow.

a. In claims 1 and 2, it is unclear if the second set of surcharge-bearing terms and conditions” is part of the “initial purchase agreement” or some other purchase agreement.

b. Also in claims 1 and 2, it is unclear if “the initial purchase agreement” includes a “modification thereof” or if it is a separate agreement.

c. Claim 1 recites the limitation “product(s)” in section “(c)”. It is unclear if this is the same products or different from “products” as recited in section “(a).”

d. In claim 2, it is unclear what is the corresponding structure and the equivalents of the “means for transacting a sale . . . .”

e. Also n claims 2, it is unclear what is the corresponding structure and the equivalents of the “means for completing the transaction . . . .”

Regarding both of the “means for” phrases, Applicants are also reminded, “For claim clauses containing functional limitations in ‘means for’ terms pursuant to §112 ¶ 6, the claimed function and its supporting structure in the specification must be presented with sufficient particularity to satisfy the requirements of §112 ¶ 2.” *S3 Inc. v. nVIDIA Corp.*, 259 F.3d 1364, 1367, 59 USPQ2d 1745, 1747 (Fed. Cir. 2001) (citations omitted). In other words, “[f]ailure to describe adequately the necessary

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structure, material, or acts corresponding to a means-plus-function limitation in the written description means that the drafter has failed to comply with Section 112, Para. 2.” *Atmel Corp. v. Information Storage Devices, Inc.*, 198 F.3d 1374, 1380 53 USPQ2d 1225, 1229 (Fed. Cir. 1999) citing *In re Dossel*, 115 F.3d 942, 945, 42 USPQ2d 1881, 1884 (Fed. Cir. 1997)).

f. In claim 3, the phrase “constantly active” is indefinite since the metes and bounds of the phrase can not be reasonably determined.

g. In claim 15, the phrase “per channel to the industry” doesn’t make sense.

h. In claim 17, it is unclear if the “terms and conditions is the same or different from the “terms and conditions” as recited in claim 1.

16. The Examiner finds that because the claims are indefinite under 35 U.S.C. §112 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, it is impossible to properly construe claim scope at this time. See *Honeywell International Inc. v. ITC*, 68 USPQ2d 1023, 1030 (Fed. Cir. 2003) (“Because the claims are indefinite, the claims, by definition, cannot be construed.”). However, in accordance with MPEP §2173.06 and the USPTO’s policy of trying to advance prosecution by providing art rejections even though these claim are indefinite, the claims are construed and the art is applied *as much as practically possible*.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC §102***

17. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. §102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office Action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

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(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States. . . .

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

18. Claims 1-17, as understood by the Examiner, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Peterson et. al. (U.S. 6,324,522 B2) ("Peterson"). Peterson disclosed the claimed invention(s) including providing a web site system (the system is web based) that receives a purchase order; requiring the customer to agree to an initial purchase agreement (inherent in all transactions, terms and conditions include at least: price, quantity, etc.); a first set of pres-established terms and conditions (all terms and conditions are 'pre-established'); a second set of surcharge-bearing terms and conditions (inherent in at least change in delivery location, finance charge for late payment or credit payment); transacting a sale; fulfilling the purchase order; the system also possesses order confirmation, shipping confirmation).

19. Claims 1-17, as understood by the Examiner, are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by Peterson. See the analysis in Paragraph No. 18.

20. Claims 1-17, as understood by the Examiner, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Jacobus (U.S. 6,754,638 B1).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC §103***

21. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. §103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office Action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.



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22. Claims 1-17, as understood by the Examiner, are alternatively rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Peterson.<sup>1</sup> It is the Examiner's principle position that the claims are anticipated because "pre-established" terms and conditions are inherent. It is axiomatic that if a term or condition was established subsequent the sale, it would not be a term or condition of the sale.

However if not inherent, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Peterson to include expressly reciting pre-established terms and conditions. Such a modification would have provide express disclosure of the various terms and conditions required for the sale of a catalog item.

23. Moreover, the content of the catalog in this case is immaterial to the operation of the invention as disclosed in Peterson. If not inherent, it therefore would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to substitute the content of Peterson with any type of content. The descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention over the prior art in terms of patentability because the data does not functionally relate to the steps in the method. See *In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983); *In re Lowry*, 32 F.3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994). See also MPEP §2106 IV B.

24. The Examiner takes Official Notice that promotional codes are old and well known in the art. The Examiner also takes Official Notice that people and/or companies purchase items on credit. Finally, the Examiner takes Official Notice that order, payment, and/or shipping confirmation(s) are old and well known in the art.

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<sup>1</sup> See MPEP §2112 expressly authorizing alternative §102/§103 rejections when the question of inherency is present in the anticipation rejection.

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25. After careful review of the specification, the Examiner is unaware of any desire—either expressly or implicitly—by Applicants to be their own lexicographer and to define a claim term to have a meaning other than its ordinary and accustomed meaning. Therefore, the Examiner starts with the heavy presumption that all claim limitations are given their ordinary and accustomed meaning. See *Bell Atlantic Network Services Inc. v. Covad Communications Group Inc.*, 262 F.3d 1258, 1268, 59 USPQ2d 1865, 1870 (Fed. Cir. 2001) (“[T]here is a heavy presumption in favor of the ordinary meaning of claim language as understood by one of ordinary skill in the art.”); *CCS Fitness Inc. v. Brunswick Corp.*, 288 F.3d 1359, 1366, 62 USPQ2d 1658, 1662 (Fed. Cir. 2002) (There is a “heavy presumption that a claim term carries its ordinary and customary meaning.”). See also MPEP §2111.01 and *In re Zletz*, 893 F.2d 319, 321, 13 USPQ2d 1320, 1322 (Fed. Cir. 1989).<sup>2</sup>

In accordance with the ordinary and accustomed meaning presumption, during examination the claims are interpreted with their “broadest reasonable interpretation . . . .” *In re Morris*, 127 F.3d 1048, 1054, 44 USPQ2d 1023, 1027 (Fed. Cir. 1997). See also MPEP §2111.

However, if Applicants disagree with the Examiner and have either (a) already used lexicography or (b) wish to use lexicography and therefore (under either (a) or (b)) desire a claim limitation to have a meaning other than its ordinary and accustomed meaning, the Examiner respectfully requests Applicants in their next response to expressly indicate<sup>3</sup> the

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<sup>2</sup> It is the Examiner’s position that “plain meaning” and “ordinary and accustomed meaning” are synonymous. See e.g. *Rexnord Corp. v. Laitram Corp.*, 274 F.3d 1336, 1342, 60 USPQ2d 1851, 1854 (Fed. Cir. 2001) (“[A]ll terms in a patent claim are to be given their plain, ordinary and accustomed meaning . . .”).

<sup>3</sup> “Absent an *express intent* to impart a novel meaning, terms in a claim are to be given their ordinary and accustomed meaning. [Emphasis added.]” *Wenger Manufacturing Inc. v. Coating Mach. Sys., Inc.*, 239 F.3d 1225, 1232, 57 USPQ2d 1679, 1684 (Fed. Cir. 2001)

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claim limitation at issue and to show where in the specification or prosecution history the limitation is defined. Such definitions must be clearly stated in the specification or file history. *Bell Atlantic*, 262 F.3d at 1268, 59 USPQ2d at 1870, (“[I]n redefining the meaning of particular claim terms away from the ordinary meaning, the intrinsic evidence must ‘clearly set forth’ or ‘clearly redefine’ a claim term so as to put one reasonably skilled in the art on notice that the patentee intended to so redefine the claim term”).<sup>4</sup> The Examiner cautions that no new matter is allowed.

Applicants are reminded that failure by Applicants in their next response to properly traverse this issue in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b) or to be non-responsive to this issue entirely will be considered a desire by Applicants to forgo lexicography in this application and to continue having the claims interpreted with their broadest reasonable interpretation.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, it is the Examiner’s position that the above requirements are reasonable.<sup>6</sup>

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(citations and quotations omitted). “In the absence of an *express intent* to impart a novel meaning to claim terms, an inventor’s claim terms take on their ordinary meaning. We indulge a heavy presumption that a claim term carries its ordinary and customary meaning. [Emphasis added.]” *Teleflex Inc. v. Ficosa North America Corp.*, 299 F.3d 1313, 1325, 63 USPQ2d 1374, 1380 (Fed. Cir. 2002) (citations and quotations omitted).

<sup>4</sup> See also *Vitronics Corp. v. Conceptronic, Inc.*, 90 F.3d 1576, 1582, 39 USPQ2d 1573, 1576 (Fed. Cir. 1996), (“[A] patentee may choose to be his own lexicographer and use terms in a manner other than their ordinary meaning, *as long as* the special definition of the term is *clearly stated* in the patent specification or file history. [Emphasis added.]”); *Multiform Desiccants Inc. v. Medzam Ltd.*, 133 F.3d 1473, 1477, 45 USPQ2d 1429, 1432 (Fed. Cir. 1998) (“Such special meaning, however, must be sufficiently clear in the specification that any departure from common usage would be so understood by a person of experience in the field of the invention.”). See also MPEP §2111.01, subsection titled “Applicant May Be Own Lexicographer” and MPEP §2173.05(a) titled “New Terminology.”

<sup>5</sup> See 37 C.F.R. §1.104(c)(3) which states in part: “the examiner may rely upon admissions by applicant . . . as to *any matter* affecting patentability . . . . [Emphasis added.]”

<sup>6</sup> The Examiner’s requirements on this matter are reasonable on at least two separate and independent grounds. First, the Examiner’s requirements are simply an express request for clarification of how Applicants intend their claims to be interpreted so that lexicography (or

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Unless expressly noted otherwise by the Examiner, the preceding discussion on claim interpretation principles applies to all examined claims currently pending.

26. To the extent that the Examiner's interpretations are in dispute with Applicants' interpretations, the Examiner hereby adopts the following definitions—under the broadest reasonable interpretation standard—in all his claim interpretations.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, while the following list is provided in accordance with *In re Morris*, the definitions are a guide to claim terminology since claim terms must be interpreted in context of the surrounding claim language.<sup>8</sup> Finally, the following list is not intended to be exhaustive in any way:

**Server:** “2. On the Internet or other network, a computer or program that responds to commands from a client.” Computer Dictionary, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Microsoft Press, Redmond, WA, 1997.<sup>9</sup> **Client:** “3. On a local area network or Internet, a computer that accesses shared

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even an *attempt* at lexicography) by Applicants is not inadvertently overlooked by the Examiner. Second, the requirements are reasonable in view of the USPTO's goals of compact prosecution, productivity with particular emphasis on reductions in both pendency and cycle time, and other goals as outlined in the USPTO's The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Strategic Plan, February 3, 2003 available at [www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/strat21/index.htm](http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/strat21/index.htm) (last accessed February 28, 2005).

<sup>7</sup> While most definition(s) are cited because these terms are found in the claims, the Examiner may have provided additional definition(s) to help interpret words, phrases, or concepts found in the definitions themselves or in the prior art.

<sup>8</sup> See e.g. *Brookhill-Wilk I LLC v. Intuitive Surgical Inc.*, 334 F.3d 1294, 1300, 67 USPQ2d 1132, 1137 (Fed. Cir. 2003) (abstract dictionary definitions are not alone determinative; “resort must always be made to the surrounding text of the claims in question”).

<sup>9</sup> Based upon Applicants' disclosure, the art of record, and the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in this art as determined by the factors discussed in MPEP §2141.03 (where practical), the Examiner finds that the *Microsoft Press Computer Dictionary* is an appropriate technical dictionary known to be used by one of ordinary skill in this art. See e.g. *Altiris Inc. v. Symantec Corp.*, 318 F.3d 1363, 1373, 65 USPQ2d 1865, 1872 (Fed. Cir. 2003) where the Federal Circuit used the *Microsoft Press Computer Dictionary* (3d ed.) as “a technical dictionary” to define the term “flag.” See also *In re Barr*, 444 F.2d 588, 170 USPQ 330 (CCPA 1971) (noting that it is appropriate to use technical dictionaries in order to ascertain the meaning of a term of art) and MPEP §2173.05(a) titled ‘New Terminology.’

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network resources provided by another computer (called a server).” *Id.* **Computer**: “Any machine that does three things: accepts structured input, processes it according to prescribed rules, and produces the results as output.” *Id.*

**Internet** “The worldwide collection of networks and gateways that use the TCP/IP suite of protocols to communicate with one another. At the heart of the Internet is a backbone of high-speed data communication lines between major nodes or host computers, consisting of thousands of commercial, government, educational, and other computer systems, that route data and messages.” *Id.*

**Data** “Plural of the Latin datum, meaning an item of information. In practice, data is often used for the singular as well as plural the form of the noun.” *Id.*

**Network** “A group of computers and associated network devices that are connected by communications facilities.” *Id.*

**Web site** “A group of related HTML documents and associated files, scripts, and databases that is served up by an HTTP server on the World Wide Web. The HTML documents in a Web site generally cover one or more related topics and are interconnected through hyperlinks. Most Web sites have a home page as their starting point, which frequently functions as a table of contents for the site. Many large organizations, such as corporations, will have one or more HTTP servers dedicated to a single Web site. However, an HTTP server can also serve several small Web sites, such as those owned by individuals. Users need a Web browser and an Internet connection to access a Web site.” *Id.* **HTTP Sever** 1. Server software that uses HTTP to serve up HTML documents and any associated files and scripts when requested by a client, such as a Web browser. The connection between client and server is usually broken after the requested document or file has been served. HTTP servers are used

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on Web and Intranet sites. *Also called* Web Sever . . . . 2. Any machine on which an HTTP server program is running.” Id.

**Surcharge** “charge added to a charge, cost added to a cost, or tax added to a tax. *See also* SURTAX.” Dictionary of Business Terms, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition; Friedman, Jack P., General Editor; Barron’s Educational Series, Inc., 2000.

**Product** “2 a : something produced” Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition, Merriam-Webster Inc., Springfield, M.A., 1997 (“Collegiate Dictionary”).

**For** “1 a — used as a function word to indicate purpose <a grant ~ studying medicine>” Id.

**Information** “ 2 a . . . (3): FACTS, DATA . . . ” Id.

27. In light of the Examiner’s use of the Collegiate Dictionary noted above, and because applicants frequently misunderstand the historical order of definitions and their corresponding senses, the following excerpts from the “Explanatory Notes” in the Collegiate Dictionary are provided:

### **Definitions**

#### **Division of Senses**

A boldface colon is used in this dictionary to introduce a definition. . . .  
It is also used to separate two or more definitions of a single sense. . . .  
Boldface Arabic numerals separate senses of a word that has more than one sense. . . . Boldface lowercase letters separate the subsenses of a word. . . .  
Lightface numerals in parentheses indicate a further division of senses. . . .

#### **Order of Senses**

The order of senses within an entry is historical: the sense known to have been first used in English is entered first. This is not to be taken to mean, however, that each sense of a multisense word developed from the immediately preceding sense. It is altogether possible that sense 1 of a word has given rise to sense 2 and sense 2 to sense 3, but frequently sense 2 and sense 3 may have risen independently of one another from sense 1.

28. When a number sense is further subdivided into lettered subsenses, the include of particular subsenses with a sense is based upon their semantic relationship to one another, but

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their order is likewise historical: subsense 1a is earlier than subsense 1b, 1b is earlier than 1c, and so forth. Divisions of subsenses indicated by lightface numerals in parentheses are also in historical order with respect to one another. Subsenses may be out of historical order, however, with respect to the broader numbered senses. Collegiate Dictionary, pp 19a-20a.

29. Regarding the conditional language in the claims such as “or,” Applicants are reminded of the USPTO’s policy regarding such conditional language. “Language that suggest or makes optional but does not require steps to be performed or does not limit a claim to a particular structure does not limit the scope of a claim or claim limitation. [Emphasis in original.]” MPEP §2106 II C.

30. With respect to claim 2, the Examiner respectfully reminds Applicants that: “A system is an apparatus.” *Ex parte Fressola* 27 USPQ2d 1608, 1611 (B.P.A.I. 1993)(citations omitted). Additionally, “[c]laims in apparatus form conventionally fall into the 35 U.S.C. §101 statutory category of a ‘machine.’” *Ex parte Donner*, 53 USPQ2d 1699, 1701 (B.P.A.I. 1999)(unpublished), (Paper No. 34, page 5, issued as U.S. Patent 5,999,907). Therefore, it is the Examiner’s position that Applicants’ system claim (*i.e.* claim 2) is “product,” “apparatus,” or more specifically, “machine” claims.<sup>10</sup>

31. In light of Applicant’s choice to pursue apparatus, product, and/or a machine claim as noted above, Applicant is reminded that functional recitations using the word “for” only (*i.e.* not ‘means for’), “to,” or other functional terms (*e.g.* see claim 2 which recites “to allow an Internet user to purchase a commodity-type product”) have been considered but are given

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<sup>10</sup> Products may be either machines, manufactures, or compositions of matter. MPEP §2106 IV B. 2 (a).

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little patentable weight<sup>11</sup> because they fail to add any structural limitations and are thereby regarded as intended use language. A recitation of the intended use in a product claim must result in a structural difference between the claimed product and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed product from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it reads on the claimed limitation. *In re Casey*, 370 F.2d 576, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) (“The manner or method in which such machine is to be utilized is not germane to the issue of patentability of the machine itself.”); *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). See also MPEP §§ 2114 and 2115. Unless expressly noted otherwise by the Examiner, the claim interpretation principles in this paragraph apply to all examined claims currently pending.

32. With respect to claims 1 and 3-17, Applicants are also reminded that functional recitation(s) using the word “for” or other functional terms (*e.g.* “for allowing customer to electronically choose and purchase the products at a pre-established price and on a self serve basis” as recited in claim 1) have been considered but also given less patentable weight<sup>12</sup> because they fail to add any steps and are thereby regarded as intended use language. A recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in additional steps. See *Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. v. Ben Venue Laboratories, Inc.*, 246 F.3d 1368, 1375-76, 58 USPQ2d 1508, 1513 (Fed. Cir. 2001) (Where the language in a method claim states only a purpose and intended result, the expression does not result in a manipulative difference in the steps of the claim.).

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<sup>11</sup> See *e.g. In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983)(stating that although all limitations must be considered, not all limitations are entitled to patentable weight.).

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*



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33. Additionally, the Examiner notes that “the PTO and the CCPA acknowledged product-by-process claims as an exception to the general rule requiring claims to define products in terms of structural characteristics.” *Atlantic Thermoplastics Co. v. Faytex Corp.*, 970 F.2d 834, 845, 23 USPQ2d 1481, 1490 (Fed. Cir. 1992) (hereinafter “*Atlantic Thermoplastics v. Faytex I*”). Furthermore, the Federal Circuit “acknowledges that it has in effect recognized . . . product-by-process claims as exceptional.” *Atlantic Thermoplastics v. Faytex I*, 970 F.2d at 847, 23 USPQ2d at 1491.

Because of this exceptional status, the Examiner has carefully reviewed the claims and it is the Examiner’s position that claims 1-17 *do not* contain any product-by-process limitations whether in a conventional format or otherwise. If Applicant disagrees with the Examiner, the Examiner respectfully requests Applicant in his next response to expressly point out any product-by-process claim(s) and their limitations so that they may be afforded their exceptional status and treated accordingly. Applicant is reminded that “even though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself.” *In re Thorpe*, 777 F.2d 695, 697, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985) (citations omitted).<sup>13</sup> Failure by Applicants in their next response to also address this issue in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b) or to be non-responsive to this issue entirely will be considered intent by Applicants *not* to recite any product-by-process limitations. Unless expressly noted otherwise by the Examiner, the preceding discussion on product-by-process principles applies to all examined claims currently pending.

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<sup>13</sup> See also MPEP §2113.

### *Conclusion*

34. References considered pertinent to Applicants' disclosure are listed on form PTO-892.

35. The following two (2) citations to the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure ("MPEP") apply to this Office Action: MPEP citations to Chapters 100, 200, 500, 600, 700, 1000, 1100, 1300, 1400, 1500, 1700, 1800, 2000, 2100, 2200, 2500, 2600, and 2700 are from the MPEP 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, Rev. 2, May 2004. All remaining MPEP citations are from MPEP 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, August 2001.

36. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

37. In accordance with *In re Lee*, 277 F.3d 1338, 1344-45, 61 USPQ2d 1430, 1434-35 (Fed. Cir. 2002), the Examiner finds that the references How Computers Work Millennium Ed. and 6<sup>th</sup> Ed. by Ron White; How Networks Work, Millennium Ed. by Frank J. Derfler et. al.; and How the Internet Works, Millennium Ed. and 6<sup>th</sup> Ed. by Preston Gralla are additional evidence of what is basic knowledge or common sense to one of ordinary skill in this art. Each reference is cited in its entirety. Moreover, because these five references are directed towards beginners (see e.g. "User Level Beginning . . ."), because of the references' basic content (which is self-evident upon review of the references), and after further review of the entire application and all the art now of record in conjunction with the factors as discussed in MPEP §2141.03 (where practical), the Examiner finds that these five references are primarily

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directed towards those of low skill in this art. Because these five references are directed towards those of low skill in this art, the Examiner finds that one of ordinary skill in this art must—at the very least—be aware of and understand the knowledge and information contained within these three references.

38. Also in accordance with *In re Lee*, the Examiner finds that Nathan J. Muller's Desktop Encyclopedia of the Internet, ("Desktop Encyclopedia") is additional evidence of what is basic knowledge or common sense to one of ordinary skill in this art. Muller's Desktop Encyclopedia is a practical reference that clearly explains Internet services, applications, protocols, access methods, development tools, administration and management, standards, and regulations. Because of the reference's basic content (which is self-evident upon examination of the reference) and after further review of the entire record including the prior art now of record in conjunction with the factors as discussed in MPEP §2141.03 (where practical), the Examiner finds that the Desktop Encyclopedia is primarily directed towards those of low skill in this art. Because the reference is directed towards those of low skill in this art, the Examiner finds that one of ordinary skill in this art must—at the very least—be aware of and understand the knowledge and information contained within the Desktop Encyclopedia.

39. Finally and also in accordance with *In re Lee*, the Examiner finds that the reference Introduction to Financial Accounting, Revised 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. by Horngren et. al. ("Horngren") is also additional evidence of what is basic knowledge or common sense to one of ordinary skill in this art. The Examiner finds that Horngren describes basic financial accounting practices permitting the user to obtain a thorough grasp of the fundamentals of accounting. The Examiner finds that proper accounting techniques and/or procedures are of utmost concern in e-commerce transactions. The reference is cited in its entirety. Moreover, because the reference is a introductory accounting textbook that presupposes no prior knowledge of

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accounting, because of the reference's basic content which is self evident upon review of the reference, and after further review of the entire record including the prior art now of record in conjunction with the factors as discussed in MPEP §2141.03 (where practical), the Examiner finds that Horngren is primarily directed towards those of low skill in this art. Because Horngren is directed towards those of low skill in this art, the Examiner finds that one of ordinary skill in this art must—at the very least—be aware of and understand the knowledge and information contained within Horngren.

40. In accordance with the USPTO's goals of customer service, compact prosecution, and reduction of cycle time, the Examiner has made every effort to clarify his position regarding claim interpretation and any rejections or objections in this application. Furthermore, the Examiner has provided Applicants with notice—for due process purposes—of his position regarding his factual determinations and legal conclusions. If Applicants disagree with any factual determination or legal conclusion made by the Examiner in this Office Action whether expressly stated or implied,<sup>14</sup> the Examiner respectfully reminds Applicants to properly traverse the Examiner's position(s) in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b) in their next response. By addressing these issues now, matters where the Examiner and Applicants agree can be eliminated allowing the Examiner and Applicants to focus on areas of disagreement (if any) with the goal towards allowance in the shortest possible time. If Applicants have any questions regarding the Examiner's positions or have other questions regarding this communication or even previous communications, Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact Examiner Andrew J. Fischer whose telephone number is (703) 305-0292. If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's immediate supervisor,

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<sup>14</sup> *E.g.*, if the Examiner rejected a claim under §103 with two references, although not directly stated, it is the Examiner's implied position that the references are analogous art.

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Robert Olszewski, can be reached at (703) 308-5183. To respond to this Office Action by facsimile, fax to (703) 872-9306.

*ag Fischer 2/28/05*

Andrew J. Fischer  
Patent Examiner  
Art Unit 3627

AJF  
February 28, 2005